(c) if so, to what extent US missile defence programme would help India's defence capabilities;

(d) whether any agreement in this regard was signed between India and US; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Does not arise.

Purchase of Russian aircrafts for defence purpose

1701. SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India propose to acquire Russian aircraft for defence purposes; and

(b) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Russian aircraft have been in the inventory of the Indian Air Force for almost four decade and different aircraft are procured from time to time as per requirement.

Amount paid for purchase of 10 mirage 2000-H/TH aircrafts

1702. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of money paid for purchase of 10 Mirage 2000-H/TH aircrafts by India;

(b) whether extra money was paid for speares, while this purchase was negotiated;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a Panamian registered firm had filed a suit in Commercial Tribunal of Paris seeking payment from Dassault Aviation on this deal for the services rendered by it in clinching the deal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Due to confidentiality clause in the contract, it is not possible to disclose this information.

(c) and (d) M/s Dassault Aviation has informed that Government proceedings have been initiated against their company by Keyser Inc before 'The Tribunal de Commerce' (Commercial Court) of Paris. M/s. Dassault Aviation have also stated that they have no agreement or commitment whatsoever with anyone or any entity in connection with the contract.

IAF helicopter/MIG plane crashes

1703. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of IAF helicopters crashed during the last three years;

(b) the number of MIG aircraft crashed during the last three years; and

(c) the reasons for such crashes?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Eleven (11).

(b) Forty six (46).

(c) With a view to determine the causes of such accidents, independent Courts of enquiry are constituted and the cause/(s) of each accident is/are determined. Three broad causes have been identified for aircraft accidents. They are—Human error, Technical Defect and Bird Hit.

Indian Naval and airfield facilities for operations in Afghanistan

1704. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US has sought use of naval and airfields facilities in India for its military campaign in Afghanistan; and

(b) if so, the response and reaction of Government in these regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Government has received specific requests for assistance in connection with 'Operation Enduring Freedom' from certain friendly countries, including the United States. Those requests that conform to our existing policy guidelines for overflights and refueling of aircraft and port calls by naval ships have been approved.